

Rural Water District No. 1
Ellsworth County, Kansas a/k/a Post Rock Rural Water District
Regular Meeting Minutes
January 21, 2025

At 6:39 pm Chairman Bland called the meeting to order and called for roll call.

Directors present at roll call: Director Bland, Director Robbins, Director Wehrman, Director Griffith, Director Teppe, Director Dolezal, and Director Christy were present. Director Splitter was absent.

Staff present: Jon Wright, Angela Naegele, and Roxanne Stevenson

Others present: Leslee Rivarola (consultant)

Chairman Bland called for public comment. No one was present to offer public comment.

Chairman Bland called for a motion to approve the agenda. Director Griffith requested to add discussion about future improvements and projects, such as increasing pipe size, etc. Discussion followed. Chairman Bland requested to add discussion about the ongoing drought and how the District is going to respond if the drought continues. Mr. Wright suggested adding the drought discussion between items number 4 and 5 on the current agenda. Director Dolezal moved to approve the agenda with the two additional items – a discussion on future projects, and a discussion on drought conditions to the agenda. Director Griffith seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion.

Chairman Bland called for any discussion on the minutes from the December 17, 2024 regular board meeting. Director Wehrman inquired on page 4 of the minutes about the difference in the estimated amounts for reimbursement on the Highway 281 project with KDOT. Mr. Wright explained that KDOT was supposed to pay for the relocation and that there was an additional section of line that needed relocating that wasn't included in the original plan set that was submitted to the District from KDOT. Mr. Wright went on to say that staff located the necessary documentation and had the request for reimbursement submitted prior to the end of 2024. The project started in 2021 and materials and products really escalated due to COVID-19 and a shortage of materials. The total request for reimbursement ended up being \$161,063. The District anticipates being reimbursed for that entire amount. Chairman Bland asked if there was any additional discussion, questions, or revisions to the minutes. Director Griffith motioned to approve the minutes as presented. Director Robbins seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion.

Chairman Bland called for the next item on the agenda the bills to be paid and the District's expense report. A question was asked about the amount of the bills to be paid - \$272,519.65, which is much higher than the previous month expenses. Mr. Wright shared that it included the payment to the Kansas Water Office for water purchased by the District. Discussion followed. Director Griffith motioned to approve the bills to be paid totaling \$272,519.65. Director Dolezal seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion.

Chairman Bland called for the next item on the agenda, the discussion on the drought conditions. Chairman Bland expressed his concerns regarding the lack of rain, and noted the snowstorm didn't help to alleviate the conditions. Discussion followed. Discussion regarding the City of Ellsworth and their current usage of Post Rock water and their contracted maximum followed. Mr. Wright noted where City of Ellsworth pulls their water from and also mentioned that the City of Ellsworth is currently without a city manager, so the last person he spoke to about water usage is no longer with the organization. Several board members brought up needing to review inactive meters as well. The board discussed whether or not to impose water restrictions. Discussion followed regarding the difficulty of enforcement on water restrictions if there are no dole valves. Mr. Wright mentioned the drip system in Mitchell 1 Rural Water District, and that it's easier to restrict based on their setup. Discussion regarding the previous engineering studies for the District not adequately taking inactive meters and water contract maximums into account followed. Director Wehrman suggested looking at previous pamphlets and information the District has sent to customers during drought conditions. Discussion followed. A question regarding the number of pasture meters and what it would take to add a dole valve to pasture meters. Director Christy inquired if exceptions would be made for ¼ sections versus ½ sections, and discussion followed about what information would be willingly shared by property owners. Director Wehrman expressed concern about limiting the flow of water to pasture meters if PureField was going to continue to receive water unrestricted, as PureField does not have a contract with the District. Discussion followed regarding the amount of water being sold to PureField. Discussion followed on how and when to communicate with customers about the need to conserve water. The board discussed best practices and that restricting the flow of water to pasture meters should be something happening all the time and not just in drought conditions, as the customers using pasture meters have storage tanks. Mr. Wright added to the discussion that federal home lending regulations prevent homes using federal loan funding from being on well water, adding to the demand for customers to connect to Post Rock. Director Teppe brought up the R9 Water Project, and that the District needs to be planning for when PureField no longer needs water from Post Rock. Director Wehrman asked if staff had the Resolutions the Board passed previously when conservation was implemented. Staff indicated they would look for those Resolutions. Director Wehrman found a letter from the District which referenced the District's requirements for conservation measures when available storage capacity dropped below 85% and when demands for water exceeds 1.1 million gallons per day. There was discussion on the date of the letter, and whether the letter was from 1996 or 2015. Discussion followed on the amount of water PureField used in the last month – approximately 200 gpm and that PureField may need to increase their storage capacity so they aren't drawing so much water constantly. A question then was posed on how much water can be pulled from the lake. Discussion on previous communications with the Kansas Water Office about securing more water rights followed. Ms. Rivarola provided background information that previously the District inquired about securing more water rights from Kanopolis Lake, and at that time more water rights were available, and additional water rights had to be contracted in a similar take-pay manner. Following discussion on the District's water needs, Chairman Bland requested a letter be prepared to customers regarding the need to conserve water and drought conditions. Mr.

Wright stated they will prepare something for the Board to review at the following meeting. Mr. Wright also indicated he would inquire about purchasing additional water from Kanopolis Lake.

Chairman Bland called for Board member reports. There were none.

Chairman Bland called for the General Manager's report. Mr. Wright shared that he got the engineering agreement back to Wilson and Company. He also sent them the information from PEC. Wilson and Company would be getting started. Mr. Wright shared that he had sent in a form and had a productive follow up conversation with North Central Planning Commission. He reported that North Central Planning Commission could assist the District with preparing grants for various projects and the North Central Planning Commission actually prepares the grant application. Mr. Wright stated that he would submit a new form for each potential project to the North Central Planning Commission. The first project application is for a new clarifier drive. Mr. Wright is also preparing a form for a new raw water pump. Mr. Wright will be looking at each County the District serves for potential grants to install AMR's. Chairman Bland inquired if there was anything the District would be eligible to receive from FEMA in Ellis County after the recent blizzard and snow storms. Mr. Wright stated that he had asked that question to Mr. Ronnebaum with KRWA and he said the District would likely not be eligible. Mr. Wright shared that he is actively working towards any grants that would assist the District. Discussion followed from the Board and the Board expressed appreciation for the work on the grants. Mr. Wright stated that distribution had been chasing a small leak. Mr. Wright provided an update on the AMRs for Ottawa and Barton County. They are in and he is waiting on the registers for the AMRs for Ellis County. Director Griffith asked if the Board could get a report by County with AMR information. Mr. Wright stated he would work on getting a breakdown by County and how many have been installed and how many need to be installed. Mr. Wright shared that Ms. Rivarola had prepared amendments to a few Wholesale Agreements. Mr. Wright has sent them to Mr. Luckman for review. Mr. Wright shared that he was contacted by Osborne County No. 2 Water District and they are requesting the District consider taking them over. Their minimum rate is \$65 per month and Osborne 2 would have approximately \$31,000 to give the District. Chairman Bland stated that the Board had considered a similar request previously and that Osborne 2's system was glued pipe. Discussion followed on Osborne 2's request. Ms. Rivarola provided some history on the discussion between the two district's from 2019. Following discussion Mr. Wright indicated he would bring more information back to a future meeting. Mr. Wright shared that he had been approached by someone in Gorham who was in the District's boundaries but wanted to purchase water directly from the City of Gorham because of how much water line the owner would have to extend to be serviced by Post Rock. The owner would have to complete a one-and-a-half-mile extension to connect to Post Rock. The owner would need to extend about 400 yards to connect to the City of Gorham. Discussion followed with inquiries about what the by-laws allow and whether or not the District should allow it. Mr. Wright was going to look into it more.


At 8:33 pm Chairman Bland called for a 10-minute break.

At 8:44 pm Chairman Bland reconvened the meeting.

Chairman Bland called for a motion to recess into executive session. At 8:45 pm Director Christy motioned to recess into executive session for 15 minutes under K.S.A. 75-4319(b)(1) to discuss non-elected personnel with the justification to discuss performance of individual employees to include all Board members, Mr. Jon Wright, and Ms. Leslee Rivarola. Director Teppe seconded the motion. All Board members present voted in favor of the motion. At 9:00 pm the Board reconvened in open session. At 9:02 pm Director Christy motioned to extend the previous executive session for 5 minutes under K.S.A. 75-4319(b)(1) to discuss non-elected personnel with the justification to discuss performance of individual employees to include all Board members, Mr. Jon Wright, and Ms. Leslee Rivarola. Director Dolezal seconded the motion. All Board members present voted in favor of the motion. At 9:07 pm the Board of Directors reconvened in open session taking no action from the executive session.

Chairman Bland called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. At 9:08 pm Director Christy motioned to adjourn the meeting. Director Griffith seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of the motion.

Respectfully Submitted:


Secretary/Treasurer

2-27-25
Date